May 2002

The Redbird Word

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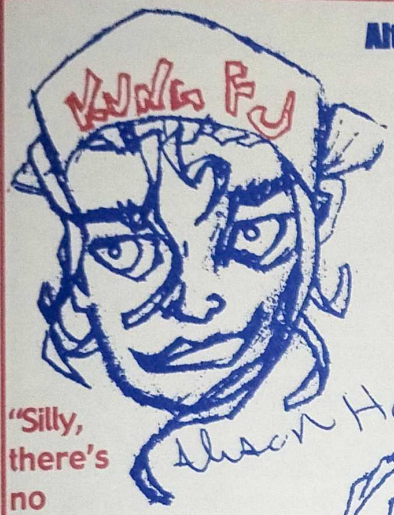
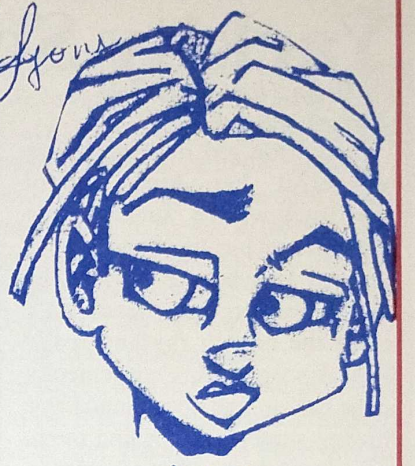
Alton High School 2200 College Ave. Alton, IL 62002



"Silly, there's no basement in the Alamo!"

Senior

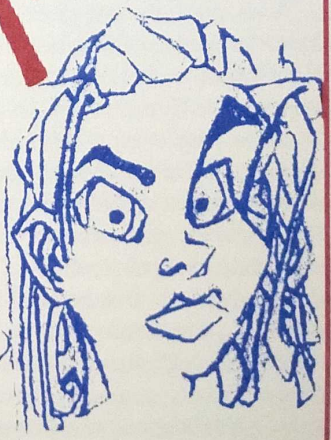


"Adobe"

"BOTTMAN"

Edition

"BOJANGLES!"



Pushy Broads and Power Trips

RBW — Senior Edition — May 2002

Blah, Blah, Blah... Yackity Schmackity

by Alison "Tootsie" Hanold
Editur'n'Cheeph

Photo courtesy of ME

Any little girl imagining how wonderful her high school experience will be, automatically gets a mental picture straight out of a cheesy teenybopper movie. She and all her gorgeous friends walk down the hall in rhythm to the BBMak song playing conveniently in the background, long blonde hair flowing strategically behind them, and Abercrombie tank tops perfectly in place.

I'm not afraid to admit that even I, the resident feminist, had these surrealistic mental pictures flowing through my own prepubescent head once upon a time. I, however, was obviously misled. I wish my Fairy Godmother would have shown up and given me a good whacking on the noggin, and instructed me to divert my attention away from the beautiful girls and bad pop music, and directed my view to the funny looking extra with bad hair, wearing boys' clothes, laughing about something that no one *else* in the super-crowded hallway thought was funny. This is where my destiny would lie.

OK, I take that back. I think my hair is pretty cool, goshdarnit.

Well, after my Fairy Godmother would have broken this news to me, she would obviously have gone for a box of tissues and some tranquilizers, because I would have become hysterical after hearing that *I* would one day be a *nerd*. It really shouldn't have surprised me all that much, because (history really does repeat itself) I was a nerd back then, too! Everyone feels sorry for the little girl in the Gifted class who is freakishly tall (5'5 by the fourth grade, no joke), has an afro and wears spandex pants and her older brother's oversized t-shirts everyday. Oh yes, it's all painfully true.

Well, after years of practice, I feel that I have, in fact, nearly *perfected* the art of nerdism. I've been a theatre nerd (which I am most proud of), a school nerd, a choir nerd, and a walking fashion faux pas. I am hereby crowned the Queen of the Nerds.

Most people might think that if I had the opportunity, I might change the fact that I am of the less cool species of high schooler, and turn myself into a popular snobbish type of girl. Well, they couldn't be more wrong. Nerds are not only more fun to be around, because they obviously don't care what other people think of them, but most of the nerds I know are also incredibly loyal. I've heard so many tales of woe from the "other" side of the Pit of girls stealing their best friend's boyfriends, and more accounts of "talking smack" than I can count on my fingers and toes. I would much rather have a large group of people I don't really know nor care about think I was a loser than have my best friend secretly hate me.

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It seems that so much of high school has been devoted to celebrating those of us who are popular and ridiculing those of us who are not. Maybe no one realizes that one day the nerds, geeks and dorks of this school will use their talents which currently oppresses them to their advantage, and make a wonderful life for themselves, rich with success. For those of us who have no priorities other than partying and ridiculing others, well, I wish the best for you. If your priorities don't change, however, you'll be the laughing stock of our reunion; that is, if your trailer makes it.

This picture is pointless, but I loves me some Jimmy!
Photo courtesy of myfallon/multimedia/index.htm

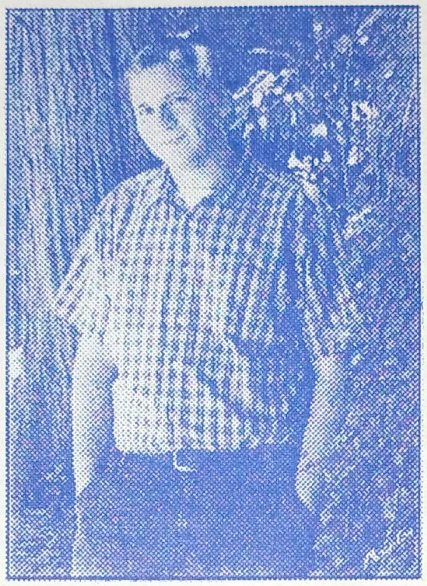
Cover designed and illustrated by Chris Evans

Straight From the Bird's Mouth
RedBird Word
Senior Edition May 2002

The Code to Know and Live By

by Nik "J2 Bia" Kern
Managing Editor

There are many rules at Alton High. We all know what they are. Wear your ID's and do not park in the faculty parking area. We have heard them countless times. However, there are also those rules you just know, the implied rules. You know you are not supposed to run down the halls screaming profanity while doing cartwheels. You also know that you should not start going out with your best friend's boyfriend or girlfriend right after they have broken up. Last time I checked, these rules were not in the *Student Conduct Handbook.*



There is also another set of rules that Alton High School students just know, and that is "The Code of the Senior." Lately, this rule has not been followed by underclassmen. The outbreak of backlash has become quite ridiculous. Like all other rules here at AHS, written and implied, it is vital for underclassmen to follow!

Let me give you a small refresher course on what these implied rules are. First of all, do not park in a senior's parking spot; we get here when we can so it is always vital we have it available when we arrive to school. Secondly, do not show a senior up. If you think you can do something better, too bad, you will have to wait your turn until you become a senior. Next, do not try and steal a senior's boyfriend/girlfriend. This is a big NO NO and is liable to get you into serious predicaments.

Also, always let the seniors out of the parking lot. We have lives, we need to leave! Throwing food at a senior's table is not tolerated. It is bad enough we have to be in the cafeteria, we know what it was like to have an open campus. Most importantly, do not spit in the water fountain if a senior is in line behind you. We do not want to look a that while we drink the water. Those things are dirty enough; it does need your help adding to the contamination.

Never forget, no matter how stupid we may appear to be, it is not appropriate to make fun of us. After four years of this place you may turn stupid, too. Lastly, you are not better than us, so stop acting like it!

There are only eight rules to the "Code of the Senior." Is it that hard to follow them? I did just fine following them when I was an underclassmen. It is a shame that all of these free spirit rebellious underclassmen have come in and think they can overthrow the "code."

I hope that this small refresher course will benefit next year's senior class. Hopefully they will have things better than we did. I understand that it is easy to slip up on the rules, but these rules are to important to forget about. Good luck to all of you in your future academic lives, and best of luck to the class of 2002. After four long, tedious, toilsome, ridged years, I will finally be free. It is the best feeling in the world!

What I Learned I Learned From Oprah

by Stefanie "Oprah is My God" Walker
Senior Editor

As these past four years boil down, I remember what adults have told me. They all said, "High school is the best years of your life." Now that my high school years are coming to an end I think to myself how wrong they were. To think that high school is the best years of their lives, I wonder how awful their lives are now.

I am not saying high school is the worst years of your life, it is just a journey in life to find yourself. There are adults who have still not been on this journey. That is why they all go on the Oprah show and try to find their inner selves.

After eight years of watching Oprah's show, I am secure with myself. I am okay saying my two idols are Mariah Carey and RuPaul, but I felt that before I entered high school. I do not feel that I have to impress anyone for any reason. I believe that I am smart and funny, and if anyone disagrees I will respect that and move on.

I think high school is a good learning experience, but not the best years of my life. You learn a little about life but not everything. My goal as a freshmen was to have as much fun as I could without any other substances like drugs or alcohol. I am proud to say I have succeeded in reaching my goal. I have had as much fun as others who have used those substances, maybe more fun because I can remember the good times.

I think the reason people told me high school is the best years of your life is because you do not have as much responsibility as you do after high school. My advice for your high school years is having as much fun as you can and be happy!

Procrastinators and Lazy People CAN be Scholars

By Andy "I'll Take My Time" Clark
Senior Editor

Over the years, I have come to find out that teachers in high school really do not give a rat's butt whether or not you do any work. They have no reservations about failing you straight out of their class and laughing because they still get paid for it. In fact, most students who ask their teachers if they can make up their work get laughed at and are told, "Don't worry about it."

Personally, I am the most procrastinating son of a gun around, in fact I was late in writing this article. I turned it in three days after it was due. Because of some teacher's policies of LATE= ZERO credit, this presents a problem for me.

Now, I am intelligent, (according to myself and a few others) but very VERY LAZY. If I had a choice between living in a box with no work and a mansion with a trivial amount of work, I'd still take the box. Due to unfortunate circumstances, I have to work because I need to eat and sleep and other annoying activities..

My struggle in school isn't due to my laziness or my procrastination, it is due to the fact that I can do little to no work, and

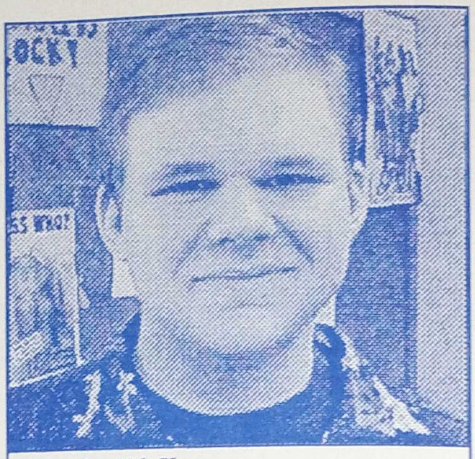


Photo by Nik Kern

still understand the information taught in class. This is not a merit at all, no matter what you may think. By being able to absorb and process information without even trying, I really have no "busy work" grades in any given course.

Take for example my Creative Writing class in which I excel. There are no tests in the class, and my entire grade is based on work that I have completed. Needless to say, my grade is quite low. I'll still pass, like any other class, but then I'll still get yelled at by my mom and get the, "You can do better than this." speech Oh well.

This attribute along with an extreme case of senioritis, has caused all my grades to fall dramatically.

I don't remember studying for a test since the third grade. I remember clearly, it was a long division test. Even with no studying, I make excellent grades on tests.

The ACT is another example, I made a 33 with my eyes closed. I cannnot wait until college where some classes are all tests. This is my ideal class. I get chills at the thought of just waiting for the test, blowing it away, and getting credit for doing absolutely no work.

So, anyway, if you are looking for advice from a student who coasted through all of high school, here it is. If you can coast, coast.

If you cannot coast and try, you are going to be a super senior, and that does not mean with super powers, more like super slack off

I Am Coming Out Ahead

by Jennifer "Smell My Purse" Frederick
Photographer

The thought of graduating from high school has been going through my mind all this semester. It has not yet sunk in that in a short while, my classmates and I will be in college. This FALL! It is finally time to start growing up and pursuing careers. Right now, however, all I am thinking about

is what am I going to do this weekend and what I am going to do for Prom. I am ready to go to college but I am not ready to grow up. I love being a teen.

I was once told by an English teacher, "You only come out of high school with about a fist load of friends. True friends." I think this is the truth. I have two older sisters who are both out of college and have started their lives, but they never seem to talk to friends they made in high school. It is sad, but my teacher was right. I have gone to school with some of these kids since kindergarten and now I hardly talk to any of them because we all have changed. Some of these people were my best friends and we hung out together. Now after the summer I will not see most of them because they are going to college or a branch of the armed forces.

I do regret not talking to them or even not saying "hi" to them in the hall, but at least I have made friends with some of them again, mostly due to the classes we have together and talking about the past. Though we cannot live in the past, we must move on. In my opinion, coming out of high school with about five close friends is the most that anyone could ever ask for.

I am now done writing but I just realized I am ready to grow up and become a responsible adult. Still, I can't be blamed for acting like a kid every now and then.

Put a Good Buzz On?

by Alex Tanner "Big Al"
Senior Editor

Friday! The one word that can make a week of horror and depression seem to evaporate without a trace. For an average teenager, Friday nights consist of a few laps around the mall before heading to a movie with a group of friends. Unfortunately, this has changed drastically since my freshman year. Many people say that college is the place in which young adults begin to "experiment" with beverages, herbs (not from Mom's garden) and numerous other substances; however, this is no longer true as it was in the youthful days of our parents. High school has not only become the time of experimentation for teenagers, it is now a period of binge drinking and "smokin' out."

Scientists and intelligent adults may easily understand concepts like, "Drinking and using mind-altering substances before a youth's brain is at a state of full growth and development damages the outer layers of the brain cells or even kills the cells and causes diseases in the central nervous system such as: Wernicke's encephalopathy, Korsakoff's psychosis, alcoholic polyneuropathy and alcoholic pellagra." Consequently, teenagers hear "Blah, blah blah blah blah, alcohol blah blah blah."

Before my freshman year, I had only heard of marijuana and seen pictures on the after-school specials on PBS. The smell had never been introduced to my virgin nostrils, but that would quickly change. Eventually, I realized that the fragrant aroma floating out of the boys' bathrooms and following the hazy-eyed kids returning from uptown was not cigarette smoke. At first I thought "how stupid of those delinquents to use drugs at school," but after I discovered that "everybody was doing it" I nonchalantly accepted the idea. As I ascended the ranks of seniority each year, partying became a progressively frequent activity. I found that I had no friends outside of school who did not spend every weekend or school evening drinking and smoking to excess.

If I asked the parents of ten partiers, I can almost guarantee that at least eight of them would be totally oblivious to their children's activities and some would even shun me for suggesting that their kids were not the perfect angels that they envisioned. It is frightening that, at the age of 16, drinking the most alcohol in the shortest amount of time could be the goal that infatuates their child. Should not their goals be related to college or sports or a future career? How could the highlight of every weekend be passing out, the highlight of every Monday morning involve talking to friends and trying to figure out what you did or where you went on Saturday night? How can destroying the greatest tool man will ever have, the brain, be accepted by society as "cool"? It scares me to think that a generation of drunks and "burnouts" will one day run this great country, probably into the ground.

I had the single most traumatic experience of my life when I was arrested for drinking and driving. I had broken not only a law, but a serious moral that I held dear for the simple fact that I can not stand to think that I could have injured or killed someone. What really scared me is that I could not even remember taking the field sobriety test, being handcuffed, or sitting in the jail cell waiting for my horrified parents to bail me out! Sure I knew that it happened, but I could not even remember the details of an event that changed my life forever.

Fortunately, this turned out to be the greatest thing to ever happen to me. Wait! Do not get the wrong idea, drinking and driving is stupid, but getting into trouble saved my life. No joke. I have realized that making mistakes is part of life, but learning from them is the important thing to remember. Since my accident I have renewed my faith in God, due to the fact that I, as well as the others that I passed on the road that night are still alive. I have reprioritized my life and now devote my time to school and look forward to receiving an education in college, not a partying license.

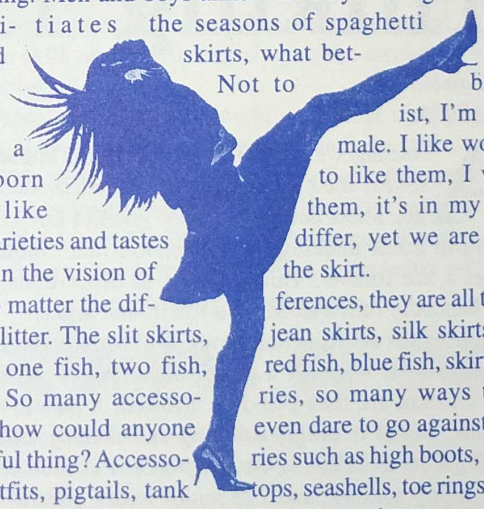
If you feel no remorse for the partying life-styles that many of you lead, at least remember one thing, Life is short. Do not end it before you have a chance to enjoy it.

Ode to Skirts

by Chris "BoJangles" Evans
Senior Editor

Sitting inside my luxurious automobile, listening to the melancholy tones of Mudvayne, I can't help but notice the change in school scenery. Signs of spring are manifesting all throughout Alton High, the fish trees blossoming and exuding their therapeutic fragrance, sunglasses and sandals adorned about the students, and of course, the skirts.

Who could forget the skirts? They are the single best sight of spring. Men and boys alike wait all year long for spring. It initiates the seasons of spaghetti straps and skirts, what better? Not to be sexist, I'm simply just a male. I like women, I was born to like them, I will always like them, it's in my blood. Our varieties and tastes differ, yet we are all the same in the vision of the skirt.



No matter the differences, they are all the pick of my litter. The slit skirts, jean skirts, silk skirts, plaid skirts, one fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish, skirts skirts skirts. So many accessories, so many ways to love them, how could anyone even dare to go against such a beautiful thing? Accessories such as high boots, school-girl outfits, pigtails, tank tops, seashells, toe rings, and so many many more... -drool-. God was a gracious man when he sparked the idea of skirts, and for that I will never turn my back on him.

Warm weather brings out the best in me, because it brings out the best of skirts. My glossy eyes and shaky knees continue watching the ever-changing glamorous scene, even though my time is coming. Yes, there isn't much time left for my googling and staring at skirts, but I will caress and pamper the time that I do have left at Alton High. My high school privileges will be stricken from me, but yet I will move on to bigger and better things, next up... College!

Leaving Advice is FUN!

By Andrew Bott
Self-Proclaimed Humor King

As old people often say when reflecting on their hippie youth, "high school was the best time of my life." I don't think this is the complete truth. The way it turned out for me, senior year was by far the best part of high school, and that will be the wisdom I pass along to my deadbeat grandchildren.

I look back to the discolored haze that was freshman year and recall an incident on the first day of school. I had a question and went to the nicest looking teacher I could find. My question, "Are we allowed to take our backpacks with us into class?" The answer, "You're a freshman aren't you?" Well I felt salty, and walked away. This pretty much set the tone for that year, working my fanny off in an attempt to establish myself as a 'good student'. Unfortunately, this didn't leave time for many extra circular activities, which I now regret. (Freshmen, if you think you want to try something, i.e. sports, band, chorus, do it as soon as you can. You all will look back and wonder why you didn't try.)

Well that led to sophomore year, which as everyone knows is a strange transition year. A student is no longer senior-fodder, but not an upperclassman either. I don't remember anything that happened all year long.

Junior year was completely and totally awesome - until September (But that's a completely different editorial). My school life was better than the previous two years. By the end of the year, I had more friends and acquaintances than ever before, and my GPA had only slightly slumped. I met a lot people last year that I consider my good friends today. In retrospect, junior year was like a golf tee. Something that holds the ball in place, while the kicker tries to score a home run.

Senior year, for lack of better wording, rocked groovestyle nonstop. Three years of challenging oneself academically and working like crazy to get ahead is definitely the path to take. Then in the fourth year of high school have two study halls, and classes with all your friends. I have one of the best class schedules of any one I know, but don't get me wrong, it had to be earned. (So freshmen, do that too - OK.?)

The only qualm (good word) that I have with my senior year, is that it has to end. It has been the best year of my life, and I have only to thank my friends. I leave graduating seniors with the following advice: Don't abandon the relationships you established in high school. Remember how much fun you had, and remember who made that possible.

To Freshmen: be like me. I am good :-)

Drinking Their Lives Away

by Josh Lambie
Business Editor

A teenager's life is full of decisions. These decisions reveal their personalities, characteristics, and morals. These decisions can be good or not so good. The decision to drink underage is a decision that could change a teenager's life forever. This decision to drink underage could single-handedly ruin a teenager's life in one night.

Drinking for adults is not wrong. But for underage teenagers it is illegal. This means if a person underage is drinking and is caught chances are they could be arrested. A person could even lose their license if caught drinking and driving underage. Besides, drinking and driving contributed to 101 fatal crashes, 360 serious injury crashes, and 723 minor injury crashes in the year 2000 according to Drinking and Driving Statistics (http://www.ltsa.govt.nz/research/drink.html). Twenty-five percent of all road deaths involved drinking alcohol. If you do not care about yourself, at least care that you could take another person's life when drinking and driving.

Teenagers do not realize that drinking also causes some physical problems. The more a person drinks the more damage they can do to themselves. The earlier a person starts to drink, the earlier the chances are they could have physical problems. According to the National Center for Health Statistics 25,192 people died from chronic liver disorders in 1998. Liver disorders were ranked the tenth cause of death in 1998. The stats speak for themselves.

Prom is just around the corner. This is a festive time where girls and guys spend all their parents' money on tuxes, dresses, limos and expensive dinners. Prom is also a time where underage teens decide to drink. Prom is a fun time to be enjoyed by all. Prom, contrary to some people's beliefs, is fun without alcohol. Hopefully teenagers will someday realize the chances they take when making the decision to drink underage.

Photo by Sears

Live and Learn

by Carol "Kurl" Lyons
Sports Editor and all-around Super Babe

The end is nearing, and the plunge into the real world will be here before we know it. High school is an experience like no other. It's probably the most memorable four years of your life. It is a time when you prepare for the real world. A time when you find out who your true friends really are. A time to realize popularity isn't everything. Yet the most important lesson I've learned during these four years is to be content with who I am.

The best advice anyone will ever giver you is "to be yourself." Throughout high school I felt like everyone was trying to be cool or to be popular. I'll admit it, I was just as guilty of this as anyone else. Then I realized I wasn't happy being who everyone else wanted me to be. So I decided to be myself, and if people didn't like me, then the heck with them. As I look back on it now I don't understand why I would want to be like anyone else. I'm happy with who I am.

In reality, popularity can only get you so far. Yeah, popularity might get you out of the Pit every once in a while or get you out of Saturday morning detentions. Popularity won't get you a job, happiness or friends. So is popularity as cool as it sounds? I'd have to say no.

Another thing I came across in high school is how much people change. I remember the friends I had at the beginning of my freshmen year; ones I used to be inseparable from and miraculously they don't know me anymore. Don't you just love the people who you used to be friends with don't even acknowledge you in the halls? I think your true friends are the ones who will be here for you throughout all four years of high school. So be very cautious when selecting friends. My advice to all young cats is to "be yourself" and be proud of who you are. High school happens in the blink of an eye and I'm sure you wouldn't want to waste it trying to be someone you are not. Cherish your time in high school and, if nothing else, learn from the situations you encounter while you're here.

And Nine Barrels of Hay Shall Be Given to the Master

by Walter "Jay" Theobald
Copy Editor and Resident Hottie

Photo taken Alex Tanner

I've been writing idiotic articles for eight months now, and not just because nonsensical ranting comes natural to me, and not just because I needed the grade, but because I consider comedy and humor to be extremely important. While you can argue about whether or not my writing was actually amusing or not, you cannot dispute humor's importance in our society. When the most powerful man in the world has a 91 IQ, and we're buying oil from countries that want us dead, a sense of humor is practically integral to one's survival.

Comedy brings out the best in people. There's no better feeling than laughing out loud (love is overrated) and it's only appropriate that it's the same all over the world. It's for these reasons that I consider talented comedians to be extremely valuable. Think how drab the world would be without Jay Leno's witty banter. Okay... bad example... but you know what I mean. Taking the most horrible, appalling and depressing elements of news and society, and putting a spin on them that makes it comical, is quite an impressive skill, and one that rarely gets the amount of respect it truly deserves.

Of course, comedians are nothing without their punch lines and jokes. A good joke can make you laugh, and take the weight of the world off your shoulders, if only for a few seconds. It's these short vacations from the cold, hard reality that keep us sane, and able to function. *Nothing* should be taken seriously. Not entirely. Anything that is truly important is probably out of your hands anyway, so just go along with the joke.

THREE BUILDINGS AND A COUPLE OF COPS

by Dan Lester (Cocky but Loveable)
Senior Editor

How much information could one person learn in four years that could be relevant to the rest of his life? The truth is, a whole lot. High school is a different time when all we want to do is get out of here, yet something drags us to class everyday.

We have been enslaved on this campus with the closing of the Pit and with all the crap about the ID's, but we still came. Through all these crazy assignments, long tests and the ever so present finals, we will still graduate. Referrals, dealing with the Pit Nazi, and finding a parking spot are all things that have become a part of our everyday lives, yet we still put up with them

It is hard to believe that in a few weeks we will be unleashed into the real world with no one to contain us but the Alton Police Department. This school has been our home for over 744 days and now we are leaving the so called "nest;" some to college, some to the military, some to work and others to the abominable depths of who knows where.

Throughout all our differences, we still have one thing in common. On June 7 we will walk across that stage shake a few hands, and receive a piece of paper that says we are somewhat intelligent. The truth is that graduation is a closing to high school, but a beginning to the rest of our lives; lives that are free of Pit cops, tardy bells and those incessant assistant principals that walk the hallways squawking about your I.D.

With that last thought, I close out my high school writing career, and move forward towards the "real world" in hopes of making it, or at the very least, not becoming too well acquainted with the new law enforcement center.

Thank You For Everything

by Doug Beiser
Senior Editor

I remember the day my mom left my dad like it was yesterday, yet it happened when I was in second grade. I knew my mom and dad had been having problems even though they tried to hide it from me, but I didn't know how bad they were. That day I discovered how bad they were when my mom told my dad she was moving out, packed a few things and left. I remember running after her crying as she left and pleading for her to take me with her. She told me that she could not take me, said she loved me and that she would come back and get me as soon as possible. Guess what; she didn't come and get me because the court gave my dad custody of me. She only got to have me every other weekend.

Now let's skip ahead to eighth grade. Trying to fit in I get caught doing something at school that is extremely bad and ended up getting expelled. This is when my dad had enough of me and sent me to live with my mom and I got sent to an alternative school. Weird huh? I finally get what I wanted all along and I got it by getting expelled; and, to top it off, I got to go to a school that was ten times easier than the school I was in. But, it was not so great since when I got expelled I had to be punished and that punishment was a six-month grounding.

So I went to the alternative school and made straight A's and the following year I was placed back in the Alton School District as a freshman at Alton High. Being back in regular school was like a crash course from hell. I had been on the honor roll since third grade and now I could barely make a C average. This is when I started slacking. I thought I couldn't do any better so I quit trying.

So I held on by the skin of my teeth through my sophomore year. Then one Monday in the summer following my sophomore year, my mom told me you either get a job by Friday or you are out on your own. This motivated me in a hurry. I filled out so many applications, I thought my hand was going to fall off, but only two places called me back. I had an interview at Wendy's on Tuesday and one at McDonald's on Wednesday morning. Wendy's said they would call back, and never did, but McDonald's hired me right there. After I got the job, my mom asked if I really thought she would kick me out. I told her yes and then she told me she really wouldn't have.

photo by Andy Clark

Let's fast forward to a few months back when my mom told me after high school I had to move out, and told me that I need to think about what I am going to do. Day after day, she told me, "It's time for you to grow up. It's time for you to be a man." So less than a month back, I decided to join the United States Marine Corps and I am enlisted on Monday, April 15. I owe all of this to my mom. Without her pushing me, I would not be taking the steps I am taking to do something with my life and I would not be striving to be the best I can be. Thank you Mom, through the good and the bad, the thick and the thin, you have always been there for me.

Just One Guy's Opinion

by Adam Betz
News Editor

Most things that I learned in high school I didn't find in any books. Things like having senioritis your freshman year is a very bad thing, befriending upperclassmen can be very beneficial to your health and that paying 65 cents for a soda that you can buy for 50 cents just by walking a couple hundred yards is a sign of true laziness. But the most important lesson that I have learned in high school is that no one can take your opinion away from you, so don't let them.

Many times I am talking to my friends and I tell them how I feel and they look at me like I have a growth coming out of my head. The other day I was walking through the halls and some kid said to his friends that Linkin Park was a pretty cool band and he began to be attacked with insults that could leave a mere middle school student in mental anguish for weeks. People seem to think that just because someone feels differently about something than the "norm" feels, that means they belong on a different planet or something. Everyone has opinions and they will not always coincide but that is no reason to not get along with someone.

You will not always understand why your friends like the things they like, or do the things they do, or feel the way they feel, but you aren't expected to understand, just accept it and continue to love them for who they are, not what they like. I know the old saying about opinions and how they are bad, but to be perfectly honest, I feel that opinions are what make us who we are, they are what give us free will and freedom of choice.

I know that everything I am saying right now is my OPINION and I am not trying to change yours, just remember that you are who you are and not who others want you to be, and no one can ever take that away from you.

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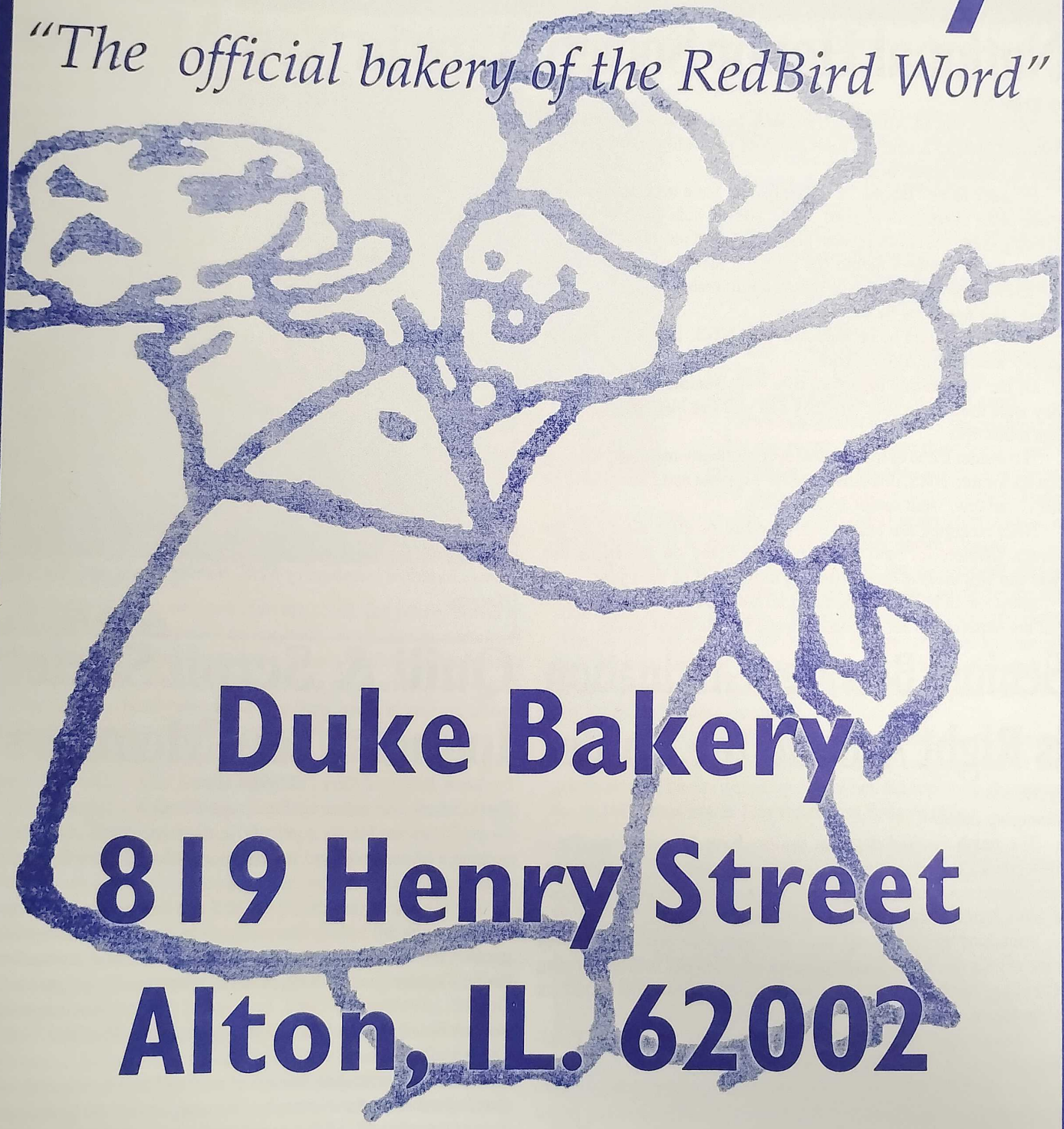

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National Honor Society Taps in New Members

by Brian Ray

On April 9th, 61 Alton High students became new members of National Honors Society. These students were chosen because of their academic achievements.

In order to be "tapped" a student must have an accumulative grade point average of at least 3.75. Along with having an outstanding GPA, the students must also have good moral standing. A list is sent to teachers before the possible members are inducted and teachers have the option to refuse membership to student's due to behavior problems by the students.

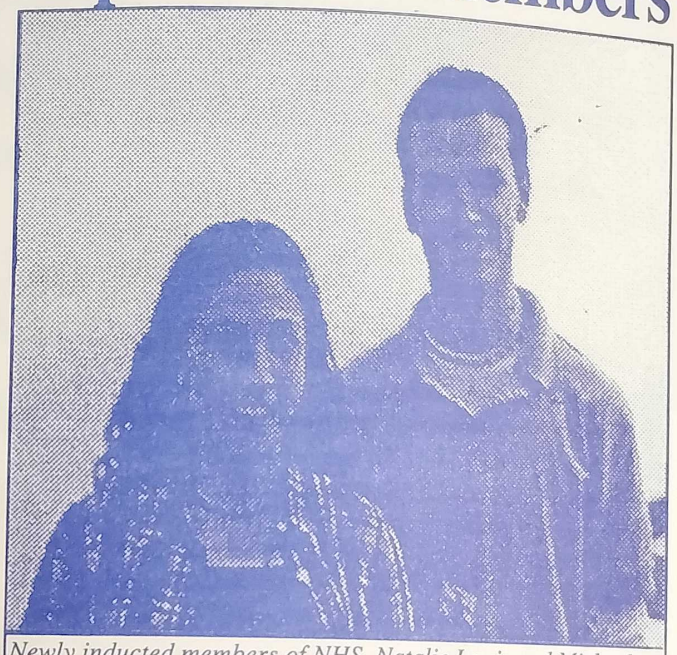
"I am so excited to be inducted into NHS, it is such a great honor," said junior Allison York.

Of the 61 students inducted, five were seniors. Even though they were inducted a year late they can still use NHS on their college transcripts.

"I consider it one of my greatest accomplishments to be inducted as a senior into NHS, this almost never happens and I am glad to be one of the few," said senior Josh Lambie.

NHS meetings are held weekly before or after school in the library. Officers for next year are being voted on sometime this year and will assume their positions at the start of next year.

Members of NHS must perform 20 hours of community service and are expected to set a good example for the local youth.



Newly inducted members of NHS, Natalie Lewis and Michael Hargiss.

photo by Brian Ray

Seniors Beware; Graduation is Right Around the Corner

by Nik Kern
Managing Editor

The much awaited day that seniors have been waiting for is right around the corner. June 7, 2002 marks the 133 commencement exercises for Alton High School. Graduation will take place at Alton Public School Stadium at 8 p.m.

Sounds of the AHS Grad Band will grace the graduates as they walk across the stage. Seniors involved in choir will be singing "Blessing," an Irish Poem, to wish everyone graduating good luck in the future.

"I have been waiting for this moment for four years," said President of Concert Choir, Heather Baumburger.

The class of 2002 will march 485 students across the stage to receive diplomas. Also the graduation will mark the passing of the baton from this year's current class president, Megan Moyer, to Courtney Schien, 2003 class president.

"I am very excited about graduation, I feel like I have paid my dues and I am really looking forward to moving on with my life," said senior Megan Moyer.

After Grad will be held at Riverbend Arena at LCCC at 12 a.m. on June 8, 2002.

Quill & Scroll Society Inducts New Members

by Adam Betz and Kari "O" Oglesby
News Editor and Editor of Backpage Funness

At 7 p.m. on Friday April 19, in the Alton High cafeteria, new members of the Quill and Scroll International Honor Society were inducted.

Annice Brave, the adviser of Q&S and the RedBird Word, started the ceremony by telling the perspective members information regarding the activities of Q&S. For example, Brave touched on the Society's participation in the Read Across America program. Laura Griffith, president of Q&S, concluded the introduction with the honors she shared in being a part of both the RedBird Word and Tatler staffs.

Scott Schwartz, past president of Quill and Scroll, served as a guest speaker for the ceremony. He enlightened the group on what being a member of Q&S meant for him. Next Alison Hanold retold the trials and tribulations of the RedBird Word. Nik Kern followed up with a recap of the annual Journalism II trip to Chicago. The ceremony concluded with the RedBird Word staff announcing the editors for the 2002-03 school year. Marissa Anderson introduced next year's Tatler editor-in-chief. The eventful evening concluded with refreshments, served by the RBW's own Nik Kern.

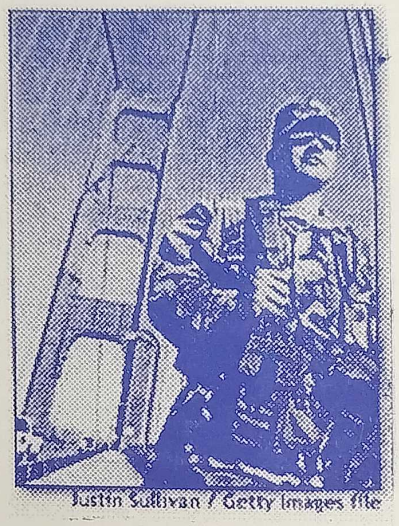
Violence in Israel

by Kenny Ross

A Palestinian suicide bomber hits a crowded market killing many. The Israelis retaliate and kill a group of Palestinian terrorists. This is a scene that is played out in the nightly news daily for Alton High students.

Junior Scott Jaffrey asks, "Why is there so much violence lately, I mean I thought the Palestinians and Israelis were talking peace?"

The Israelis and Palestinians have been at each other's throats for over fifty years. As of late, the whole issue has been escalated due to a number of factors such as Sept.11 and the restraint of the U.S. upon Israel. After 9/11 the United States found itself in the same position the Israelis have lived with for years, one of never- ending terror.



Justin Sullivan / Getty Images file

Israelis live in fear of suicide bomber attacks daily and these bombers have shown themselves to be willing to bomb any Israeli man, women, or child. After the World Trade Attacks, America has quit restraining the Israelis from retaliating to the Palestinian attacks, but this has done nothing but escalate the violence.

"Why can't the Israelis and Palestinians live together in peace? I mean don't they ever get tired of the never-ending violence?" asked junior Paul Clark.

The truth is many on each side are ready for peace, but as of now hard-liners, determined to not back down, are in control of both groups. The Palestinians have Yasser Arafat and the Israelis have Ariel Sharon. Neither side is willing to admit they are wrong or compromise. Both sides have dug their heels in and are allowing the never-ending cycle of violence to continue.

"Why do I care" I mean the Middle East is a long way from America?" said Junior Kenny Woods.

What happens in the Middle East has enormous consequences on America. The rising price of gas is in direct correlation to the escalating violence in Israel. Arab nations that control the oil are raising prices in a hope to pressure America to force the Israelis to comprise.

The war on terror is also affected because the United States cannot attack and remove Saddam Hussein without Arab nations support, and Arab nations will not support as long as the violence continues.

The violence is escalating and it is obvious to all that the confrontation in Israel could rapidly spread to other neighboring nations. Syria is mobilizing their army and preparing to attack Israel in support of the Palestinians. Iraq is offering money to the families of the suicide bombers and, most ominously of all, Egypt is preparing its army.

This situation in the Middle East is about to explode and President Bush is trying feverishly to put together a truce between the sides. History, however, shows that there is no lasting peace agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Who's the Boss?

by Daniel "Maverick" Lester
Senior Editor

In the wake of 9/11, National Guardsman have taken on a new, yet confusing identity. They aren't sure who they are working for and better yet, who is going to sign the paychecks.

The National Guard is this nation's full time, constitutionally sanctioned militia that is divided into two separate branches, the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. They have over 500,000 soldiers and airmen who perform duties that range from refueling fighter jets to handling biohazard materials.

During recent months the guard has taken on new duties such has homeland patrol, civilian airport monitoring, as well as being deployed overseas. Guard officals claim that they are ready for both roles. Col. Rick Patterson said, " This is an unprecedented time for the Guard."

These dual roles are where the conflict come in for the guard. There are three ways a guardsman can be called up; the Governor of the state calls upon them with sole discretion, Federal officials call them up, but the guard is left under state control, and the final way is a call to full military duty under Title 10.

The great controversy comes within the debate over who will pay these men and women. When called upon solely by the state, state funds pay the soldiers. When they are called upon by Federal officals, yet left under state control, the government and the state split the cost. Finally in the last scenario, when called up by the Federal government for full military duty they are paid full military pay by the federal government.

As of right now the National Guard is in limbo as to what status they are on. Are they full time military or state activated? These questions will be answered by July when the report on the status of the guard comes out in July from Tom Ridge's office.

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J2 Remembers the "Windy City"

by Laura "LaLa" Griffith
Best-Ever Features Editor

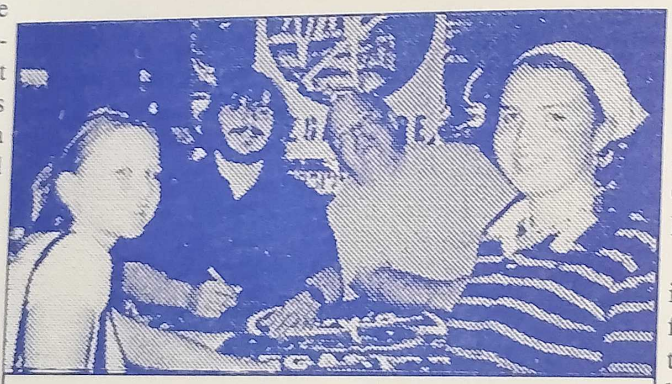
At 5 a.m. on Thursday, April 11, Alton High's Journalism 2 Honors class, a.k.a. the RedBird Word staff, took our annual trip to Chicago, IL. Many students, including myself, viewed the trip as a "last hurrah" before graduation comes and friends go away to college next fall.

Coming into J2, some of us knew each other from class last year, and some did not know each other at all. Over the past seven months or so, we have become like a family, and this trip only brought us closer.

Upon arriving at the Amtrak station, we took cabs to the Congress Plaza Hotel on South Michigan Avenue. While attempting to get settled, Mr. Tucker went over the rules. He gave us boundaries and told us where it was safe to walk downtown. Other than that, as long as we stayed in groups of three, we were basically allowed to explore the "Windy City."

After checking in, we went looking for exciting places to get lunch. On the way, we met a dancing tater-tot who gave us free t-shirts, bumper stickers and potato magnets.

At 1 p.m., we arrived at the Field Museum to see all the exhibits. In the Cleopatra exhibit there were several real mummies there, including the mummy of a baby, with the wraps worn out and the remains of the toes showing. Many of us attempted to move a stone the way the Egyptians would have moved them, and it proved seemingly impossible. Another interesting exhibit allowed us to see what each of us would have looked like as an ancient Egyptian.



Alison and Diane finally meet the D! THEY ARE THE LUCKIEST GIRLS IN THE WORLD!!!!!!

Before supper, everyone had the opportunity to do some shopping. Walking by the Virgin Records store, a group of us noticed that Tenacious D (the greatest band in the world) would be there signing autographs and such.

Alison Hanold saw how much it meant to fellow student Diane Holden that they meet the D, so she bought the CD for the third time, and gave her pass to Diane. Later on, a very nice man gave Alison the chance to join Diane, and meet Jack and Kyle as well.

"It was one of the most memorable times in Chicago. I love Jack (and Alison)!" shouted Holden.

A group of us ate at a great Oriental restaurant called the Big Bowl, then roamed the streets of Chicago, stopping to get a capuccino from Starbucks and to watch what looked like a real professional hacky sack team.

When we got back to the hotel, we decided to do a little ghost hunting. We had been clued in by Mrs. Brave herself, and some Australian ladies at the hotel that the third floor was indeed haunted.

Several of us became believers in the supernatural, after a series of strange events that involved the elevator getting stuck on the third floor, and mysteriously opening on the 12th floor, when no one had pressed the elevator button in the first place. A videotape was made documenting all the spooky sights we saw while exploring. Upon visiting the Congress Plaza Hotel website, I found that it did mention there being ghosts present in the hotel, so maybe we were on to something.

On Friday, April 12, we visited the Chicago Cultural Arts Center (Museum of Broadcast Communications). Though some of us (cough, cough) were too sick to enjoy it, the place was, to say the least, interesting.

We walked through the halls to see antique radios and televisions as we learned some history of America's popular culture. My favorite part was seeing the Beatles playing nonstop on four TVs in the first hallway. That was enough to make me like the place. The giant Tiffany ceiling was stunning. That was, until the security guard yelled at us for lying on the floor. We were only trying to fully appreciate the art, give us a break.

From there, some of us went to Ed Debevic's for lunch and planned to meet again at 1 p.m. at the Art Institute of Chicago. "The Seurat was really cool to see. I reenacted the scene in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, where Cameron stared at the painting," said Kari Oglesby.

The mini golf course at Navy Pier is for talented golfers only, which I found out the hard way. I struggled through 18 holes, while managing to have a good time.

For Forrest Gump fans, Navy Pier is heaven. We ate at the Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. There, they had on display the suit that Tom Hanks wore in the movie, along with the Curious George book, the Nike running shoes, the feather and the infamous box of chocolates. It was definitely my highlight of the trip.

Saturday, April 13 was left to the shoppers. From the time we woke up to 3 p.m. we walked up and down the Magnificent Mile, stopping wherever we wanted. Diane, Jeff Dossett and I followed Mrs. Brave to the Signature Room on the 95th floor of the John Hancock building where we enjoyed the awesome view of the Chicago skyline, at the cost of purchasing a minimum of one drink, which was nearly $5.00. It was worth it.

After a long train ride home, it was nice to be back, but I wished we were still in Chicago. This was a trip I will never forget, and I will never forget the people who experienced it with me.

(Oh, and before I forget, thanks Diane for not letting me spend a buck buying a free paper from that homeless guy. I am too gullible, what would I do without you?)

Guess These Retiring Teachers

by Diane "Maneater" Holden
Senior Editor

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Goodbye Teachers

A Mr. Amschler	F Mrs. Caffey	L Mr. Evans	R Mrs. Suess
B Mrs. Amschler	G Mrs. Capps	M Mrs. Evans	S Mr. Swick
C Mr. Blair	H Mr. Chestney	N Mr. Garner	T Mr. Underwood
D Mr. Brown	I Mr. Corona	O Mr. Krauss	U Mr. Waters
E Mrs. Buckley	J Mrs. Dunbar	P Mrs. Johnson	V Mr. Young
	K Mr. Enloe	Q Mrs. Ohren	

Pictures courtesy of Tatler '78, '82, '86, '92, '96.

1-N 12-I
2-Q 13-E
3-K 14-J
4-B 15-O
5-U 16-R
6-H 17-C
7-A 18-T
8-S 19-V
9-D 20-P
10-L 21-G
11-F 22-M

What's It

Coverstory Editor Andrew Duggan
Coverstory by Andrew Duggan

The hardest thing in life is deciding how you want to live the rest of it. It is that question of what to do next, that can be the most difficult thing we have to deal with. It is hard enough to figure out what we are going to wear in the morning or where we are going to lunch.

Sometimes we do not think about the rest of our lives. It seems as if we get to high school and we have to decide then and there what it is that we want to do.

Reality sometimes comes into play before dreams do. We have to level out what is realistic and what is not. Can our ambitions turn into our realities? Can we do anything we set our minds to? Can we achieve anything we want to?

The teachers and the dreamers of the world seem to think we can. I wonder where would we be without them? They are the ones that drive us. They fill our heads with thoughts of great ambition They let us think what we want to even if it may not be realistic. They are, without a doubt, some of the most important people a society could pocess.

Those same dreamers could be anyone, not just teachers. They could very will be mentors, older brothers or sisters, our parents, or friends. All the time giving us hope and nurturing whatever dream we may have in our young heads. They say it is always okay to dream, as long as we can achieve whatever we dream.

Though what is a dream, is it going to college, becoming a rock star, famous actor, or maybe going off to find out what we want to do? In all our thoughts how do we decide what is right for us? When everything seems so jaded and blurry what is the right road?

Truly there has to be some decision in indecision. Not deciding what to do is often the most practical choice at the time. If you choose not to decide you still have made a choice. Though sometimes practicality comes into play over our happiness. Sometimes people make our choices for us. We end up doing what other people want and not what we want. When we do that whose life are we living? The need to make ourselves happy should come before the happiness of anyone else.

Is it all about prioritizing and finding out what is important before we do or could it be about following the long and winding road and taking it to where ever it leads us? So many questions and unknown answers.

A constant factor that comes into our young minds is where is the money going to be. How do we make enough to retire at thirty and set sail for some distant island? It all comes down to what is really important to us. Is it money, or a great job? Maybe we can find the best of both.

When you are doing something you love, money is a bonus, just icing on the cake. I would like to be doing something that I love, rather than making great money, though money is always good to have.

I believe that knowing what we want to do with our lives a virtue to be admired and envied. It is often more important than anything else, because you have figured it all out. You know what will make you happiest. All that could stand in the way is whatever troubled water you have to cross to reach your dream.

Doing whatever it takes is what makes a dream a reality, all the while not letting people tell you that you cannot do what you want to do, never shutting out, though, the people who have helped you along the way, and putting on blinders to seeing only what you want to see.

You have to know that what matters is not only what you think but as the thoughts of others, because you cannot cast out others and make it all on your own. Learning to make more friends than enemies is always better than the latter.

No one ever figures it all out. Knowing that makes me realize that if something feels right to do than we should follow hearts and our dreams and do whatever it takes to make them a realization.

I believe that it is always right to dream in any color we want, if you know in your heart that it is possible. What do we have to lose if some thing happens and our dreams do not come totally true? It could be a lot, but then it could be a bump in the road.

Understanding that it does not matter what you do as long as you are happy doing it, can often be the greatest discovered virtue in life. Whether you are the head of a grocery store or a fortune 500 company, what does it matter if you are comfortable where you are?

I know that what I want to do, and it is entirely possible but it will be a long road to travel. I want to be a writer. Novels, short stories, poetry, it does not matter. When people tell me that I cannot do it, it only makes me try harder and want it even more. Making my dreams come true is going to be hard. Just like anyone else I have not figured out everything, but I know what I want to do. That, I believe is the most important thing.

And when I think about it, in four years I have learned so much. Yet there is still much to figure out, like a never-ending process that keeps building upon itself. Quite possibly the most important thing in life is living your life the way you want to.

I will always remember what I want to be and what I want to do. This is what I believe it is all about. This is what dreams and life means to me. What does it mean to you?

All About

May 2002

photo by RBW (Of course not all of J2 is pictured here)

It's All About the J 2 Awards

Diane Holden- Most Likely to be a Juggy on The Man Show
Kario Oglesby- The Shakari Award
Laura Griffith- Most Likely to "Duke It Out" with Annice Over Paul McCartney
Alison Hanold- Most Likely to Stalk Jimmy Fallon
Julie Strassman- The Morticia Award
Carol Lyons- The Sitcom Hair Award
Jenny Frederick- The Super, Wondrous, Fabulous, Magnificent, Sexy, Cuddly, Exuberant, Amazing, Transparent, Awe Inspiring, Legs Award
Nancy MacDonald- The It's All About the Ears Award
Stephanie Walker- The Oprah Award
Toni Baskin- Most Likely to Wear the Pants in Her Relationship
Chris Evans- The T-shirt Teacher Award
Andy Clark- The Intelligent Slacker Award
Nik Kern- Most Likely to Get Kicked Out of a Chippendales Tryout
The Joshua Lambie- Most Likely to Be a Stay-at-Home Mom
Doug Beiser- Most Likely to Sneak Someone Into the Movies in His Pants
Dan Lester- The #1 Priority is Myself Award
Alex Tanner- Most Likely to Become a Mentor/Camp Counselor
Juan Black- Most Likely to Ask the Same Question Twice
Andy Duggan- The Man Purse Award
Andy Bott- The Wet Noodle Award
Adam Betz- The Just Go Eat Worms Award
Jay Theobald- The Mr. Irresistible Award
Mrs. Brave- Cupid Award

A Last Word.

Being able to work for the *Redbird Word* has been the single greatest experience I have had thus far. Working with such a diverse group of people has been amazing. At times I worked with different people, but nothing like this. It is so amazing that we all have so many different ideas and especially opinions. I once thought of how great it would be to have all those ideas formed into one huge sculpture of sorts with all of our thoughts, ideas, and styles molded into it. I realized that we can, and we do. We do it every month. Every month we work together in as much unity as possible. What we accomplish may not seem like much to the population, but to us it means a lot. I will never forget the times that we had and I can not forget all the people I now know.

The greatest thing though, is how we held it all together until the end, not saying that we lost it at the end. We made some friends along the way, learned how to write better, and had possibly the greatest teacher a group of students could ever hope for. Times were trying and words were exchanged, but no one ever grew bitter or distraught. We just took it in stride and learned how to cope with whatever was thrown in our faces. I believe that we are all somehow better people, and learned something in this class that we could learn no where else. But it is not how smart the class made us, or what information we obtained, but how we learned from each other, and how we became different because of it. That is what I will remember later in life when I peruse my old high school papers.

XTREME Exposed; A positive place for kids?

Posted XTREME Rules

1. No weapons, alcohol or illegal drugs
2. No smoking under 18
3. No fighting
4. No romantic displays of affection
5. No talking or disturbance during meeting
6. No abuse of equipment or facilities
7. No speeding in vehicles on premises
8. Use garbage cans for all trash
9. Obey and respect all staff and leaders
10. Wear security armband when used

Any violation will result in a loss of privileges

by Brian Ray

When entering the New Testament Fellowship Church on a Friday night, you see everything but a church. Between seven and ten, a dance floor, billiards, video games, music and skateboarding make this church seem more like a middle school dance. Despite the belief that the Xtreme Cafe is filled with high school students, it's mostly kids twelve to fifteen, and the majority of them are doing anything but praying.

Tiffani Jones, a fourteen-year-old Southwestern student, said, "I've never been told to stop smoking, and we go here every week." Xtreme's rules are clearly posted throughout the building, one of which is no smoking under the age of eighteen.

When the church leader, Pastor Dan Butler, was asked about this, he said he does not condone smoking, but is aware that it is happening.

Vince Warlick, an off duty police officer hired for security, said, "The church tells us to let them smoke." When asked why he thought the church allowed it, he answered, "Maybe if some of the kids couldn't smoke, they wouldn't come."

Other problems involved with Xtreme are fighting and theft. Billy Johnson, a nineteen-year-old AHS alumni, was involved in a fight about three months ago. He said, "The cops got involved and ended up pushing a kid down. Then the cops got rocks thrown at them."

Sixteen-year-old Stephanie Nickle of Alton High recently had her purse stolen while at Xtreme. "I told security what happened and they laughed at what I was wearing," she said.

When Pastor Butler was asked about Xtreme security, he said he believed it was sufficient. Xtreme has recently made a commercial which shows kids skating and dancing, but doesn't show any under age smoking, fights or theft.

When asked what he believed Xtreme was about, Pastor Butler said, "Xtreme promotes a positive place for kids to hang out."

AHS Celebrates 40th Consecutive Musical

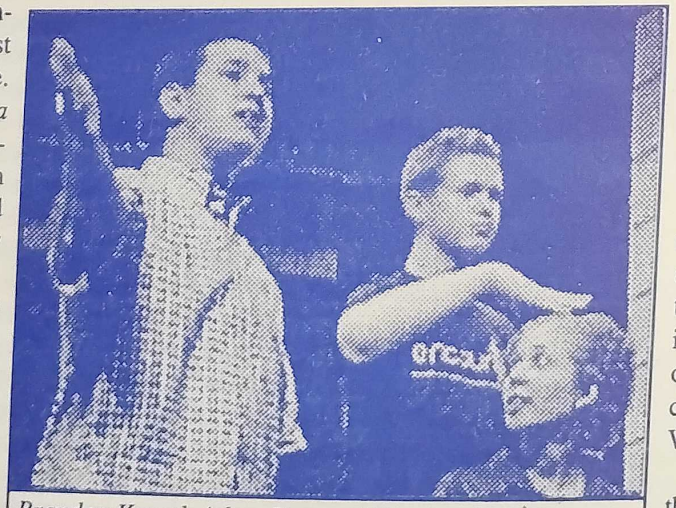
by Julie Strassman
Senior Editor

The best known story of the 'Princess and the Pea' may be the prettiest version, but it's not the most accurate. At least, not according to *Once Upon a Mattress*, this year's Alton High musical, which took place May 3, 4 and 5 in the AHS auditorium. This lighthearted rendition of the old fairy tale gave a new spin on the story.

The Prince (Chris Hesh) was more drab than charming, the Princess (Alison Hanold) was more exuberant than dainty, the Queen (Julie Strassman) was a royal terror and the King (Adam Betz) was a mute womanizer.

None of the subjects could get married until Prince Dauntless did, Lady Larken (Heather Baumberger) was pregnant, her fiance Sir Harry (Andy Clark) was running around with another woman, and the Jester (Juan Black), the Minstrel (Brandon Krepel) and King Sextimus were always making mischief.

Throw in a cheap magic trick performing Wizard (Jeremy Myers), three anxious ladies in waiting (Katie Kline, Mary Malone, and Samantha Miles), a magical Nightingale (Alison Warner), twenty soft downy mattresses and, of course, one tiny pea, and *Once Upon a Mattress* was a perfect fun loving show. Mr. Waters, AHS theatre director, said, "It's one of my favorite shows. It's a lighthearted piece of fluff with lots of interesting characters."



Brandon Krepel, Adam Betz and Heather Baumberger rehearse one of their songs. photo by Julie Strassman

Once Upon a Mattress is also the 40th consecutive musical here at Alton High, an accomplishment that few schools can boast of having. "We have a record that no other school in the area can even come close to matching," said Mr. Waters.

Cliff Davenport, the previous theatre director at Alton High, who began the consecutive musicals here, came to commemorate the fortieth anniversary musical.

After the performance on Saturday May 4, Alton High Thespian Troupe 126, which is also the oldest thespian troupe in the state, presented a plaque to Mr. Waters in honor of his hard work and dedication to theatre at AHS.

RedBird Word

ENTERTAINMENT

May 2002

Seniors Pick the Best in Movies

Best Movie

1. ***The Royal Tenenbaums***
2. *Super Troopers*
3. *Training Day*
4. *Moulin Rouge*
5. *John Q*

Honorable Mention- *Rambler*

The Tenenbaums family and friends pose for a picture. photo courtesy by yahoo.com

The many faces of Wes Anderson. photos courtesy by mr.bluesky.org, premiere.com, and salon.com.

Best Director

1.Wes Anderson- *The Royal Tenenbaums*
2. Steven Spielberg- *A.I. : Artificial Intelligence*
3. Ron Howard- *A Beautiful Mind*
4. David Lynch- *Mulholland Drive*
5. Baz Luhrmann- *Moulin Rouge*

Honorable Mention- Senior Scott Helfrich- *Rambler*

Best Actress

1. Halle Berry- *Monster's Ball*
2. Nicole Kidman- *Moulin Rouge*
3. Gwyneth Paltrow- *The Royal Tenenbaums*
4. Julia Roberts- *Ocean's Eleven*
5. Thora Birch- *Ghost World*

Honorable Mention- Senior Alison Hanold

Halle Berry and Billy Bob Thorton in "Monster's Ball." photo courtesy by yahoo.com

Best Actor

1. Denzel Washington- *Training Day*
2. Russell Crowe- *A Beautiful Mind*
3. Ewan McGregor- *Moulin Rouge*
4. Brad Pitt- *Ocean's Eleven*
5. Owen Wilson- Every movie he's ever been in

Honorable Mention- Alton High alumni Scott Schwartz and Nick Hausman- *Rambler*

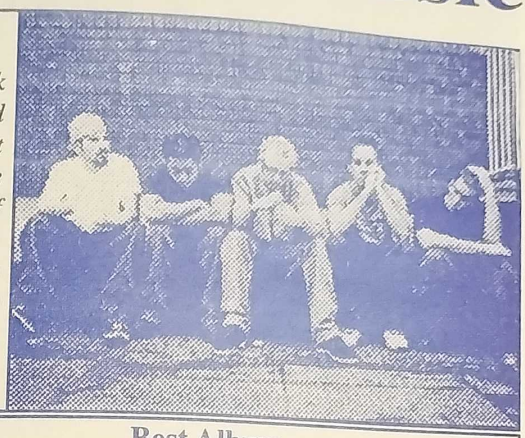
Denzel Washington (right) teaches Ethan Hawke (left) the tricks of the trade in "Training Day." photo courtesy by yahoo.com

Seniors Pick the Best in Music

Best Band

1. **Linkin Park**
2. Dave Matthews Band
3. Tenacious D
4. Blink 182
5. Jagged Edge

Honorable Mention- Behind the Stars and Horseshoes and Handgrenades



Linkin Park was voted the best band by the seniors of Alton High. photo courtesy by linkinpark.com.

"Is This It" by The Strokes was voted best album by the seniors of Alton High. photo courtesy by yahoo.com.

Best Album

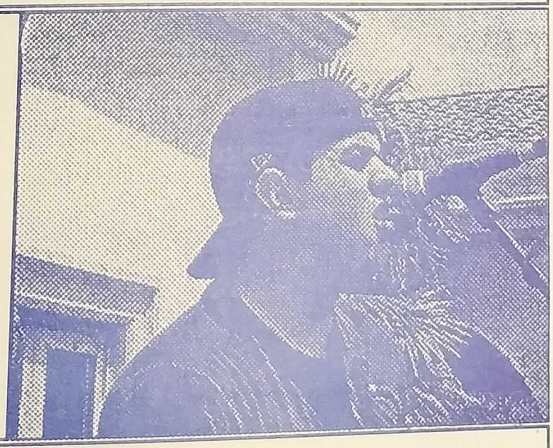
1. **The Strokes**- *Is This It*
2. Linkin Park- *Hybrid Theory*
3. Soundtrack to *Moulin Rouge*
4. Alicia Keys- *Songs In A Minor*
5. Jay Z- *Unplugged*

Honorable Mention- *Anarchy Android* by the old Entertainment Editor. . . ha ha ha. . .

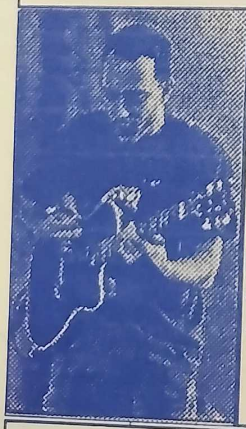
Best Song

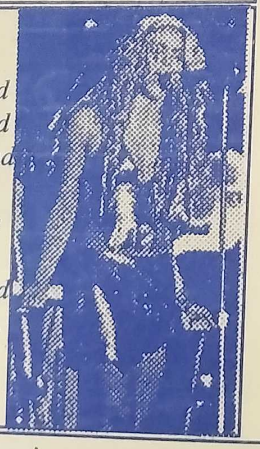
1. **"Seeing Red"- Unwritten Law**
2. "In The End"- Linkin Park
3. "Papercut"- Linkin Park
4. "Good Morning Beautiful"- Steve Holly
5. "Last Night"- The Strokes

Honorable Mention- Brian Bish, he's not really a song, but he's one heck of a chess player.



Steve Morris from Unwritten Law belts out a tune. photo courtesy of ulpunk.com.





Dave Matthews and Sharkira were voted best male singer and best female singer respectively. photos courtesy of dmbheaven.com and shakiraheaven.com.

Best Male Singer

1. **Dave Matthews**
2. Tim McGraw
3. Jack Black
4. Enrique Iglesias
5. Fabolous

Best Female Singer

1. **Shakira**
2. Alanis Morissette
3. Jo Dee Messina
4. Alicia Keys
5. Britney Spears

Honorable Mention- Senior Josh Lambie voted senior Kayla Garrott best female singer.

All of the information for the two senior survey pages was collected by the J2 staff and was edited by Nancy McDonald, the "Entertainment Expert."

Upcoming Movies

Spider-Man
Toby Maguire
Kristen Dunst
May 3

Star Wars: Episode II
Ewan McGregor
May16

The Tuxedo
Jackie Chan
June 7

Men In Black II
Will Smith
Tommy Lee Jones
July 3

Austin Powers 3
Mike Myers
July 26

Video Releases

Kate and Leopold
Meg Ryan
June 4

Shallow Hal
Jack Black
June 4

I Am Sam
Sean Penn
June 8

Rollerball
LL Cool J
June 8

The Royal Tenebaums
Gwyneth Paltrow
July 9

Blade Joins The Bloodpack

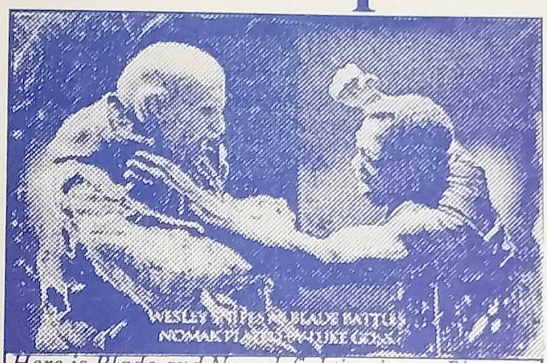
by Stefanie "Princess of Harpo" Walker
Senior Editor

Blade 2 is a magnificent action thriller. The film is over the top and nonstop. *Blade 2* blends martial arts action with comic book lore.

Wesley Snipes and Kris Kristofferson reprise their roles as Blade and Whistler. The opening scenes have Blade looking for Whistler in Europe. He uses his traditional weapons with brand new exciting twists. Blade has a new weapon expert named Scud played by Norman Reedus.

The plot of *Blade 2* is not just about Whistler, it is also about a genetic mutation that has occurred within the vampire community called Reapers who feed on vampires and humans. With a single bite they turn their prey into a Reaper. The Reapers are led by Nomak played by Luke Goss, who wants to turn every vampire into a Reaper.

The vampire clan asks Blade to fight with them against the Reapers. Blade enters an alliance with The Bloodpack who are an elite team of vampires trained in all modes of combat for three years to defeat Blade, but uses their combat experience against the Reapers. The Bloodpack is led by Reinhardt played by Ron Pearlman. The members include Lighthammer, Chupa, Snowman, Priest and Verlaine.



Here is Blade and Nomak fighting it out. Picture courtesy of www.Blade2.com

The martial arts in *Blade 2* are great. It is choreographed by Asian martial artist and actor Donnie Yen. Yen brings a super human aspect to the fighting. He has a cameo role as the Snowman.

Blade 2 is an exciting action film. The director Guillermo del Toro made *Blade 2* gorier than the first one. It has pumped up action and great special effects. There are talks for a *Blade 3*.

Celine's New Day Has Come

by Stefanie "Princess of Harpo" Walker
Senior Editor

Celine Dion new album, *A New Day Has Come,* is out in stores. This is her first album in two years. She went into retirement in order to start a family.

Courtesy of www.music.netscape.com

Dion decided to take a break to be with her husband Rene Angelil after his recovery from throat cancer. They both decided to start a family together also. During her time off they had a baby boy named Rene-Charles.

A New Day Has Come is also the first single off the album. The song expresses how she felt when her son was born. The album is all about starting over again. It is also about loss and moving on in your life.

In early April Dion had a welcome back concert. She preformed all the songs from her new album. The special included a duet with Brian McKnight in which they sang "Beauty and the Beast." She also did two songs with Destiny's Child. They sang " Emotion" and "When The Wrong One Loves You Right." The special also included her hits "My Heart Will Go On" from *Titanic* and "Because You Loved Me" from *Up Close and Personal.*

When Dion decided to come back she did not want to tour anymore. She wanted to have a career but still be home for Rene-Charles. Dion does not want to miss one moment of her baby's life.

Dion and Angelil decided to make a deal with Las Vegas casino Caesar's Palace, to have a three-year concert engagement. It will start in March 2003, she will perform five nights a week in a new $95 million stadium built for her. For information on how to purchase tickets for the show visit www.celinedion.com or call 1-888-995-1555.

In the first week, her album debuted at number one. Dion still has her voice and continues to amaze the audience with her talent. She has a voice that will go on for centuries.

MOVIN' ON UP

RBW

MAY 2002

IL State University
John Vetter
Sarah Knipping

U of Missouri Columbia
Megan Moyer
Jenny Moats
Karla Killam

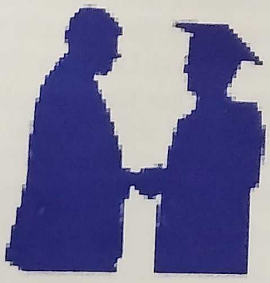
IL College
Chelsea Caldwell

New York University
Tim Grant

Northwestern University
Brad Zakrzewski

Indiana University
Chrissy Campbell

Millikin University
Jennifer Ryrie
Ryan Boyer



St Louis College of Pharmacy
Misty Prater

DePaul University
Alison Hanold

Maryville University
Rose Roderfeld
Thomas Richards

LCCC
Danielle Stees
Jamal Jones
Miranda Maraynard
Virginia Hatten
Tiffany King
Carol Lyons
Chris Evans
Andy Duggan

Jeremy Myers
Elaine Myers
Cory Maher
Kevin Bagwill
Jake Petras
Jennifer Naughton
Alex Butler
Chad Stutz
Lashonda Chapman
Diana Davis
Kennedy Bazzell
Valerie Prater
Erin Stahlschmidt
Brian Ray
Stephanie Walker
Zach Springman
Cody Cox
Jessica Rost
Marissa Anderson
Mike Holden
Tanekia Smith
Brittany Antrobus
Samantha Bellemy
Marlena Foster
Nathan Towse
Katie Scoggins
Will Clemons
Quinia Davis
Pat Gates
Daniel Norooz
Kenny Majors

George Washington U
Eric Nell

U of Colorado Boulder
Danny Lester

Webster University
Scott Helfrich
Scott Schwartz

U of I
Brian Bish
Jon Lasinski

Bradley University
Andy Galligan

Arizona State
Brett Hartig

Knox College
Stephanie Brakeville

SLU
Taylor Gaddy

UMSL
Jake Bartlett

Washington University
Mitchell Stumpf

Blackburn College
Jennifer Mueller
Becky Hughes
Lindsey Boomershine

St.Thomas University
Robb Davis

SIUE
Laura Griffith
Samantha A Miles
Nancy McDonald
Alex Tanner
Heather Baumburger
Kayla Garrot
Joshua Lambie
Nik Kern
Andrew Bott
Alma Collins
Kim Irvin
Jennifer Frederick
Adam Betz
Emily Jones
Jayme Reed
Angela Lockett
Ashley Hudock
Andy Clark
Amy Lehman
Cheryl Haggard
Juan Black
Toni Baskin
Ryan Chesnust

Western IL University
Kristina Koenig
Emily Kardis
Erin DeBlass
Diane Holden

Air Force
Ben Cooke

United States Marine Corps
Alex Vinson
Doug Bieser
Steve Porter

Cottey College
Julie Strassman

RedBird Word Editors for the 2002-2003 School Year

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News Editor - Kenny Ross
Humor Editor - Joe Hilgard
Entertainment Editor - Carl McMullen
Features Editor - Andrea Zimmerman
Sports Editor - Blake Schrumpf
Double Truck - Sarah Whitney
Copy Editor - Alex McMullen
Backpage Editor - Amy Stabell
Business Editor - Amanda Thomas
Photographers - Sarah Cleaves
and Schallon Smith
Web Editor - Zac West
Senior Editors - Anthony Gater
and Rickey Militello

Good luck to next year's staff!

This is your last chance to not take this seriously. I mean it. Don't make me stop this car.

Prom Promity Prom Prom

By Andrew Bott
Master of Hilarity

May means two things for seniors, Graduation and Prom. Let's talk about Prom since the title of this article is Prom Promity Prom Prom. Here is convenient numbered advice for enjoying Prom based on anonymous feedback.The first section is completely and totally from anonymous persons and should remain anonymous to protect the anonymity of the anonymous persons.

1. Be Careful Who You Take.

Of my friends, one currently calls his last year's Prom date Crusty McFiatch. Someone else I know now calls his ex-date What's Your Redeeming Quality. Someone I see every day calls his date from last year The Black Death. So, yeah - choose wisely.

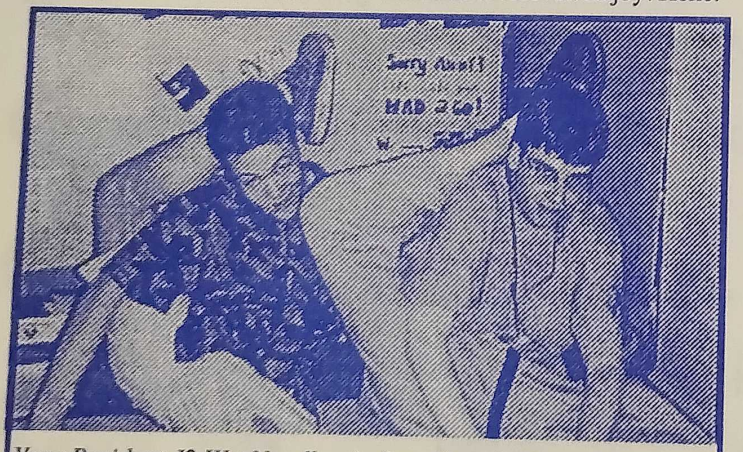
2. Be Healthy

After a miserable meal last year, all the people I went to dinner with felt ILL. Then, another one of my friends had a 103 temperature, and was hopped up on Sudafed all night. Remember - if you don't have your health, you die.

3. Have More Fun This Year Than I Did Last Year

My favorite Prom memory from last year was singing Baby Got Back at After-Prom. Blink.

Regardless, Prom is an event to remember forever. Enjoy! Hehe.



Your Resident J2 Wet Noodles Andrew Bott (Left) and Jay Theobald (Right)
Photo by Alex Tanner

Fatherly Advice

"You can pick your friends, and you can pick your nose, but you cannot pick your friend's nose."

Goodbye Alton High! I hope that all you readers enjoyed my short run as Humor Editor. Thanks for all the support, and keep reading the RedBird Word. For me, please. Really. I love you. -Andrew Bott

WHOOSH

Ed Norton, wherever you are, I'm sorry
Photo Courtesy of lavender.fortunecity.com

A Spoonful of Random

By Andy Clark
Senior Editor

So there I was - sitting on a raft in the middle of the Arctic Circle with no clothes on and under heavy enemy fire. I decided that I needed to strike back, so I jumped off my raft 50 feet down into a pile of Erector set pieces. After getting the spare pieces out of my butt, I realized that this was no ordinary Erector set, this was an Erector set dragon! I pulled out my silver spoon that I always carry with me and shoved it deep into his mechanical works.

He promptly morphed into an Indian, whereby he thanked me and a ceramic plate fell out of the sky and hit him square on the foot. He died. So I walked down the Yellow Brick Road when suddenly 84 midget giraffes surrounded me and chanted, "ooga, booga." I cried, and a bright orange fairy came up from a hole in the space-time continuum that was near the ground.

She explained to me that the only way to get rid of the giraffe folk was to eat a lump of coal. I did so, and the giraffe folk did not disappear. The fairy laughed, and called me ugly and exploded into a million pieces of Riesen. So then I walked farther down the road (with the giraffe folk still behind me and still chanting).

I met a girl with 8 braided ponytails and a magnificent puke-green ballroom gown. She tells me that I have giraffe attached to my aura, and offers to help me get them off. She chants something about running, a pencil, and cheese, and finishes her incantation with, "May the fleas of a thousand camels infest your armpits." The giraffe folk gave me the finger and drank beeswax as they trotted away. I asked the girl if she would like to marry me. She agrees, and we lived happily ever after in the land of complete and utter Willy Wonka-ness.

PANDAS OF DEATH TO TAKE OVER

by Walter Theobald
Copy Editor

Amidst all the warnings of ominous hobos, unholy penguins, spooney home decorators, knife wielding monkeys, cow tipping Texans, inbreeding, slack-jawed Texans, and nonsensical, speech impaired Texans, I have neglected to warn you of the most obvious threat to our existence... zombie pandas. Stalking their prey under the cover of night, the bamboo devouring bears take a break from their usual diet to crush open the skulls of the innocent and feast on the delicious goo within.

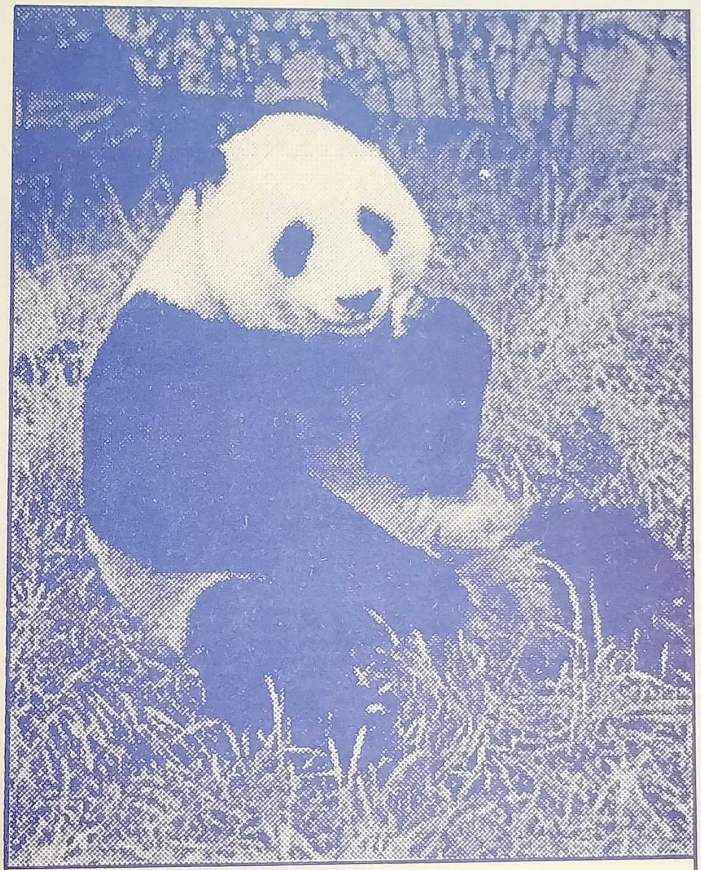
"Our only defense against these savage abominations is setting them on fire, putting a bullet in their brain, or subjecting them to repeated viewings of *Glitter*," says zombie expert Leon Chambers.

The Zombie Panda Resistance Movement got trapped in their western compound last year, on a Friday night. By morning all members were dead, and the floor covered with blood, sinew and Polish sausage. No meat product, no matter how deliciously scrumptuous, can prove to be an adequate defense against the mad bloodlust of a zombie panda.

Two weeks later, in a remote village in Zanzibar, a troop of marines equipped with assault rifles, surface to air missiles, M-80s and 1200 barrels of creamed corn were ambushed in their sleep by a pack of rabid, zombie pandas. No intelligent form of life was left in their wake.

"Zombie pandas...? What? Who the heck are you?" asks a stranger I interviewed on the street. "Hey! Don't touch my wife!!"

Though the situation may seem hopeless, my loyal informant Jim tells me that zombie pandas have been extinct for months, making this entire article irrelevant. Go Redbirds!



You can see the hatred in his eyes...
Photo courtesy of http://www.abc-kid.com

Back Alley Teacher Fight! Round One!

By Carl McMullen

Many of the students at Alton High School are unaware of one of the most amusing, underground rivalries in the school. Denny Cook, Calculus teacher and cheesecake extraordinaire, has been participating in a comical, verbal joust dripping of sarcasm with Carl Day, U.S. History Themes teacher and Civil War aficionado.

The rivalry began when the resident Master-of-Sarcasm Mr. Cook began to discuss the trivia nights he participates in with Mr. Day. From there, Mr. Cook fueled the fire with a comment about the certain "style" that Mr. Day chooses to do his hair in. "Mullet King" Day quickly countered the next day with the witty comeback "That's a lot of talk coming from a guy who has none."

After that, the floodgates opened and no topics have been left untouched in this duel of intelligence. Not even Mr. Day's beloved Tom Custer, infamous lieutenant during the Battle of the Little Bighorn, has been spared. A duel between these two respected teachers seemed inevitable.

Who would win a battle of wits? Mr. Cook has already sarcastically declared, "I'd wipe the floor with him. No contest." Mr Day has taken a more direct approach by visiting the self-proclaimed "Calculus Ninja" Cook and intimidating with his intelligence.

Students of both men have relished the opportunity to witness a real life rivalry between their teachers. Kenny Ross, a student of both, comments, "Cook talks a lot, but I think that Mr. Day could take him." He adds, "Besides, I'm getting a better grade in Mr. Day's class."

What bad blood has grown between these weekend trivia buddies? Is it the mullet, cheesecake or Tom Custer? No one knows for sure, but it sure makes an interesting story.

RBW

Sports

We're Outta here

May 2002

A Year in Professional Sports

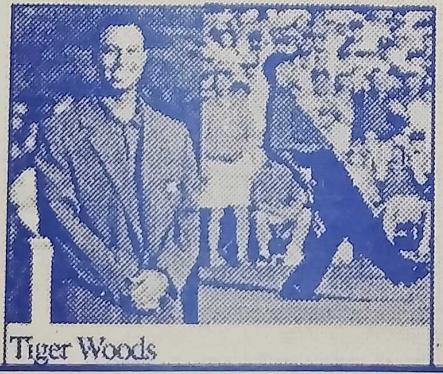
Your favorite professional basketball team.

Your favorite professional football team.

Your favorite professional baseball team.

Your favorite professional hockey team.

Your favorite professional golfer.

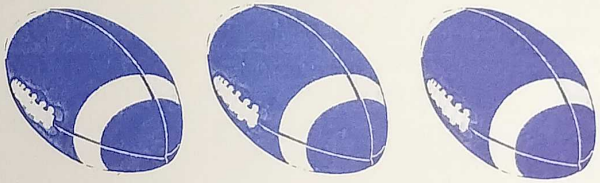


Tiger Woods

*Results were based on a survey from 100 students of the senior class.

The most memorable professional sports moment of the year.

When the survey asked what the seniors thought was the most memorable professional sports moment of the year, the answers were almost unanimous. Most seniors believed that it had to be when the Rams lost the Super Bowl game. It is obvious that the seniors of Alton High School are faithful fans to their local professional sports teams.



He Has Everyone in Check

by Andrew Bott
Humor Editor

A special request from a special friend was all that Senior Brian Bish needed to become best in the country at the 2002 National High School Chess Championships.

Bish had a perfect run, boasting a 7-0 record which was good enough to place first in his division. He was one of only five teens to achieve a perfect score at the tournament.

" Before I left, my girlfriend told me to win at least one game. So I did," said Bish.

The tournament, held April 11-14 in Louisville, Kentucky, spread out the action with two games on Friday, three on Saturday, and two again on Sunday. Players were divided into three sections; ratings under 1000, ratings under 1300 and the championship section. Bish played in the under 1300 section.

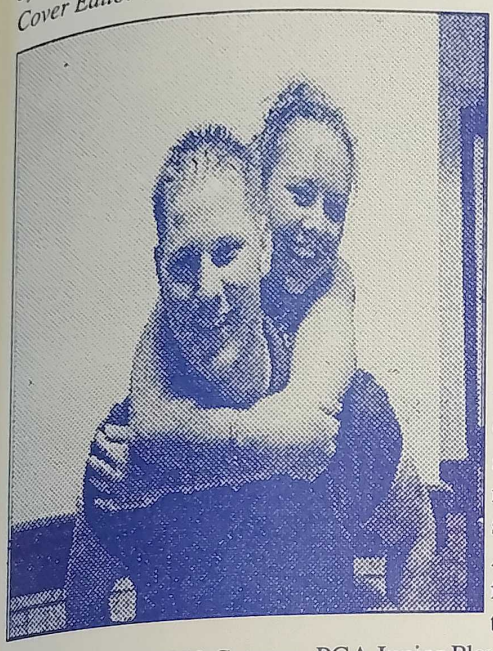
" I'm really not the best in the nation, but I won't complain if people think I am," joked Bish.

Since Freshman year, Bish has competed in numerous competitions and won an award in every tournament in which he has participated. Bish also led the Alton High School Chess Club to a first place finish in its conference this season which resulted in a third place state ranking.

" Brian is the best chess player we have ever had at Alton High ," said Jon Garner, chess team sponsor.

Alton High's Most Valuable

by Jennifer "J.Fred" Frederick
Cover Editor and Photographer



Senior **Danny Lester** was this year's and last year's MVP for boys' golf. When asked what his greatest accomplishment was, Lester said " Making it to the IHSA State Tournament." Danny is going to the University of Colorado on a golf scholarship. He has recieved awards such as three time All Southwest Conference first Team, three Time All Area first Team, and 2000 Gateway PGA Junior Player of the Year,

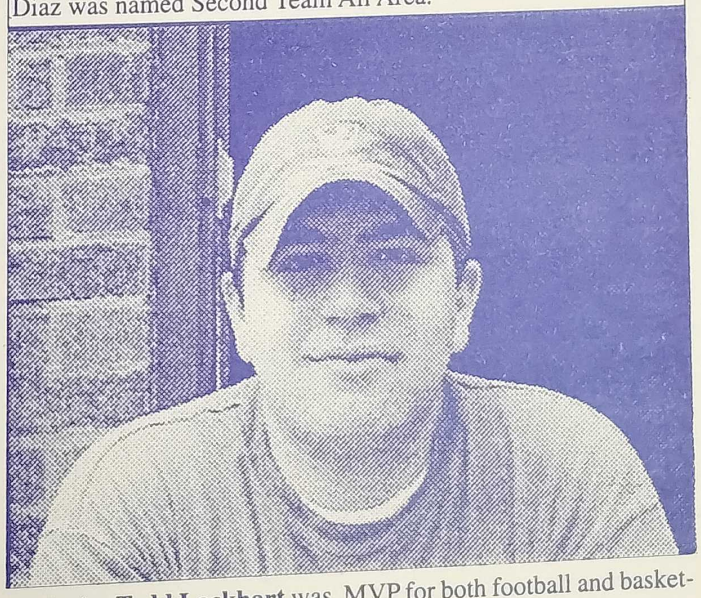
Junior **Carey Cappel** feels that she has improved a lot since her freshman year in both golf and softball. She goes to her golf coach for advice because she knows she will get a straight answer. Cappel is looking at Illinois College, University of Illinois, or the University of Missouri. She is planning on playing golf wherever she goes. Carey has won All Conference First Team 1999-2002, Conference Champion 2000-2001, MVP 1999-2002.

Senior **Jessica Stockard** scored a 29 on her ACT's and was named MVP of the basketball team,placed fourth in the Long Jump at State and tenth in the 200m Dash. These are some of her greatest accomplishments. Stockard has broken many school records in both basketball and track. Jessica is attending University of Missouri-Coulmbia and would like to play other sports there. She has such awards as the Chancellors Diversity Award Scholarship, Track and Field scholarship to Mizzou, and first Team All Telegraph Honors.

Junior **Jared Brynildsen** is this year's MVP for the boys' bowling team. His greatest accomplishment is getting the 800 series. Jared plans on going to Florida State University after Alton High. Jared said he might try to play baseball again. Brynildsen has recieved $4,000 in scholarships.

Junior **Ashley Cox** has accomplished many things such as bowling her first 300 game at the age of 14, getting fifteenth in State, and last year the girls' bowling team was picked to be the Team of the Week on the Sunday Morning Teen Sports Show. Ashley looks up to her dad for advice because he taught her everything she knows. Cox is planning on going to either Morehead State, Western Illinois, CMSU, or Purdue. She wants to bowl in college and would like to be on the dance team. Ashley has recieved awards such as girl's highest average-215 for the state of Illinois, First Team All Conference, Bowler of the Year the last four years in the Junior Bowler Club of St. Louis. Also she has won lots of scholarship money from various tournaments for college.

Senior **Mike Diaz** has played hockey for AHS all four years, playing first line his senior year and leading the team in scoring. His good friends are who he looks to for advice. Diaz is planning on going to SIUE this fall and hopefully playing hockey. Recently Diaz was named Second Team All Area.



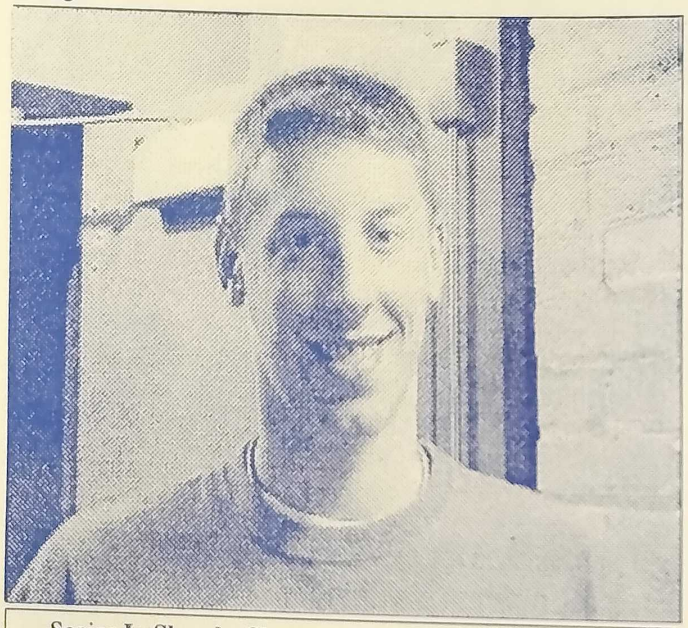
Junior **Todd Lockhart** was MVP for both football and basketball this year. His greatest accomplishments include coming from a two year losing streak to going to playoffs this year. He looks to Coach Hook, Coach Brey, his brother and his mom for advice. Todd is not sure about college yet but is looking at University of Missouri and Purdue. He plans on playing sports wherever he goes. Some of the awards he has received include MVP, second Team All Conference Running Back, first Team Punter, Player of the Week, and third Team All Conference for basketball.

RBW would like to mention that Jason Phillips was MVP for the wrestling team this year

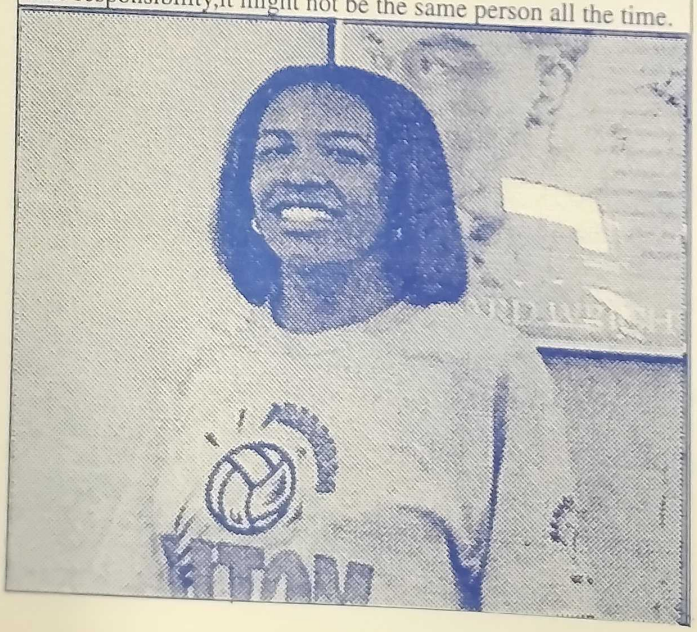
Alton High's Most Valuable cont.

by Jennifer "J.Fred" Frederick and Carol "Kurl" Lyons
Cover Editor/Photographer and Sports Editor

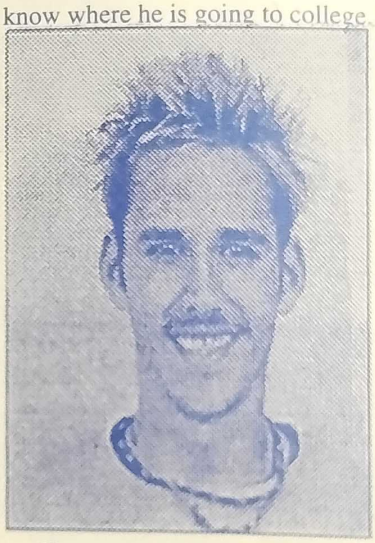
Junior **Wayne Zumwalt**'s greatest accomplishment is qualifying for YMCA Nationals. Zummwalt won the IHSA Sectional Championship 200 I.M. He plans on swimming his way to a warm college.



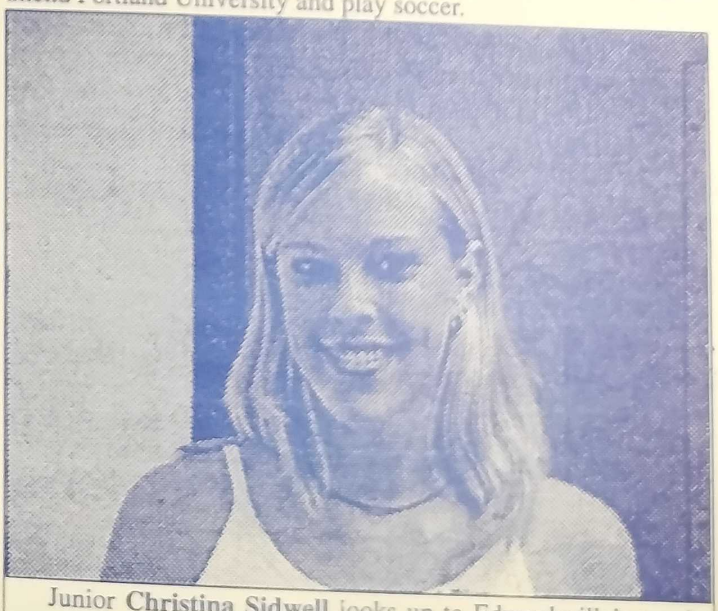
Senior **LaShonda Chapman** has won MVP, Most Kills, 2 All Tournament Team Awards, Third Team Southwestern Conference Award. She looks up to her sister and wears the number 3 because of her sisters' success during volleyball. Chapman plans on attending Lewis and Clark Community College and going into the health field. Chapman said "Attitude on the team reflects leadership and that's something we've all seen before, not everyone agrees with each other, but someone has to step in and take responsibility,it might not be the same person all the time.



Junior **Kenny Ross** is a Third place Sectional Metalist, Second place in County, MVP, and three year Varsity Letter Winner. Getting Third in Sectionals he feels is his greatest accomplishment. He looks up to his mom and Coach Wrvez. As of now he does not know where he is going to college.



He came to AHS from Alaska and that has also become his nickname. Junior **David Gillian** not only plays soccer but was ranked Eighth in the region in the 100 yard Butterfly. He was this year's MVP for boy's soccer. Helping younger kids see how much fun soccer can be is his greatest accomplishment. Alaska is hoping to attend Portland University and play soccer.



Junior **Christina Sidwell** looks up to Edwardsville's tennis coach David Lipe. Sidwell said, "He knows a lot about tennis, and he is always encouraging." Sidwell is planning on going to Union University or Belmont University. She has recieved awards like MVP sophmore and junior year, Scholar Athlete of the Year, Third Team All Conference, and All Area Team. Her greatest accomplishments include First place in Alton Tournament, Fourth place in Sectionals, and State Qualifier.

Time to go for Kario!

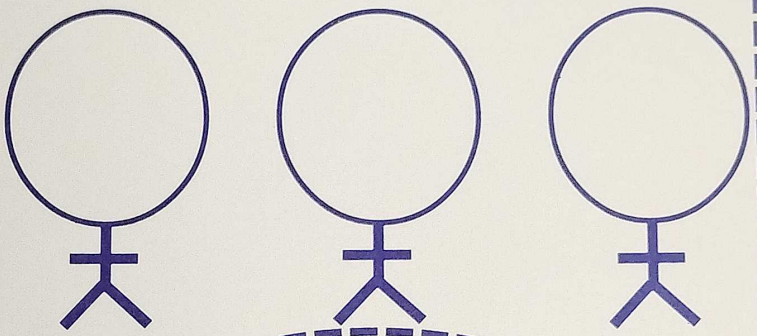
License Plate Trivia!

Match the Seniors with their License Plate

MRNDA 16	Karla Killam
KNIP 16	Emily Jones
JNSVW 21	Sam Miles
MOOSIK 2	Diane Holden
1 CORY J	Andy Duggan
CRZY 311	Carol Lyons
SAM 1228	Nik Kern
MEGL 83	Laura Griffith
CHRSY 3	Kari Oglesby
MEEGN 25	Megan Moyer
KAREE 17	Jennifer Ryrie
BZAK 84	Jenny Moats
MIS T 27	Jacob Petras
MOATR 12	Brad Zakrzewski
DOOG 13	Chrissy Campbell
D HOLDY 9	Heather Baumberger
ODELL 81	Trisha Cruz
JHNNY 5	Jane Jackson
KRLAK 15	Erin Stahlschmidt
RISSA 84	Scott Helfrich
JAKEP 11	Sarah Knipping
BLUUES 1	Miranda Maynard
GO OA 32	Misty Prater
SING 247	Marissa Anderson
9 DVLDG	Megan Erwin
ANN P 17	Cory Maher
LALA 832	Emily Kardis
SWIM 28	Katie Scoggins
TDAWG 84	Steven Porter
SCOGGS 6	Megan Loesch
EMLY 330	Ann Palazzolo
SOFBLL 4	John Jehle
BMARCH 1	Matt O'Dell

Draw Your Friends!

Draw in the ears, eyes, mouth and more to make your friends look gorgeous or silly!



A little something about your wonderful backpage editor...

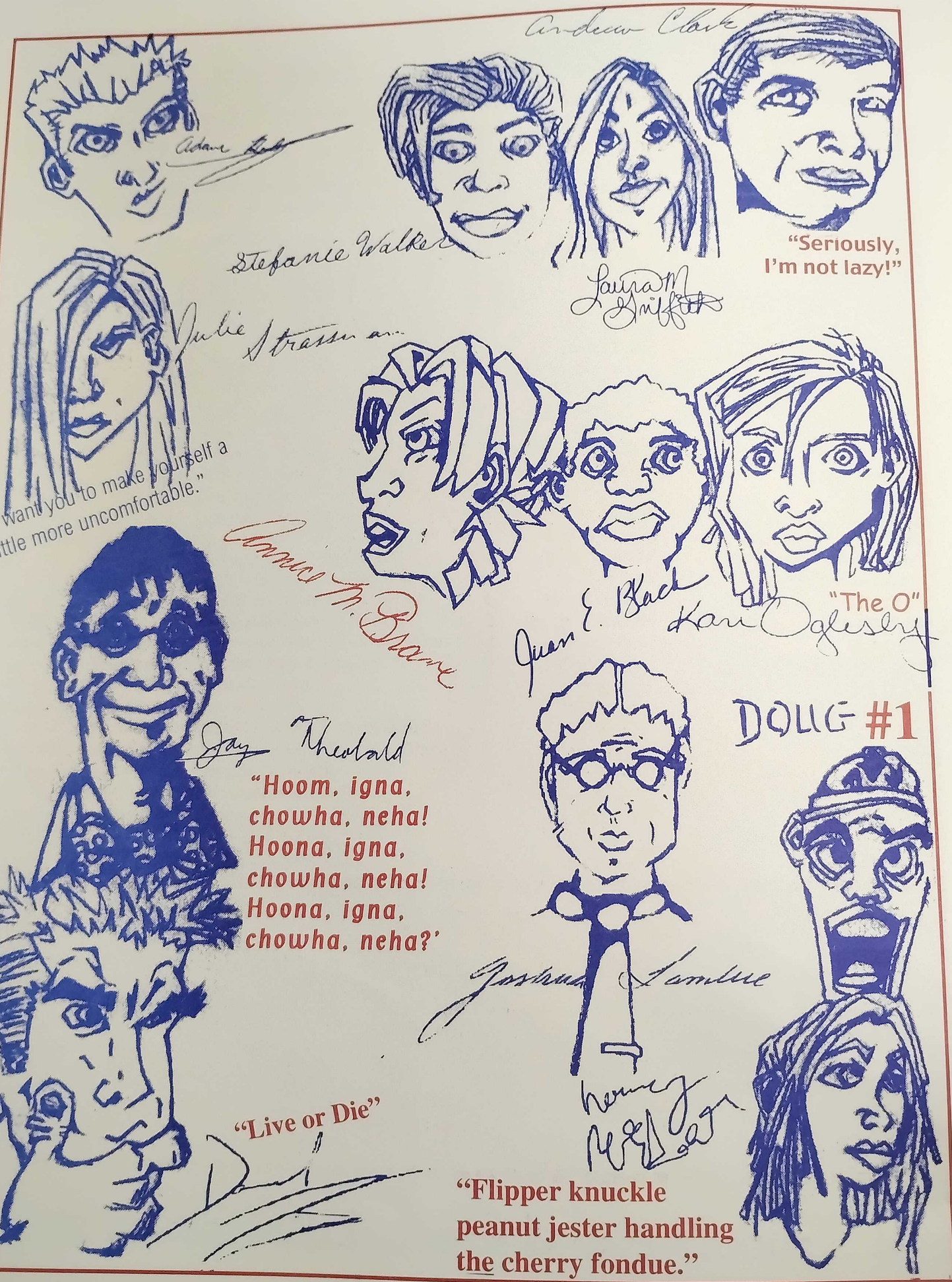
Name: Kari Ann Oglesby (A.K.A. Kario)
Birthday: May 22, 1984 (buy me a whole lot of presents!)
Favorite TV Show: *I Love Lucy* and *Survivor*
Favorite Hobby: Dancin' at Studio C.A.C. in Hazelwood, Mo.
Favorite Friends: Alison, Elaine, Jenny, Sam, and Abby!
Personal Quote: Dance as if it were your last time.
Favorite Movie: *Happy Gilmore* (Fore!) and *The Wedding Planner*
Favorite Loved One: Rob Sutton (DUH!)
Favorite Band: Blink 182
(I'm the girl at the rock show)
College Plans: Southwest Missouri State University. Then transferring to University of California in San Diego (Haha!).
Major: Broadcast Journalism
Minor: Dance Performance
Seniors, I love you all! Always put your BEST effort forward!

Try This!

example: **26 = L. of the A.** (**26** = Letters **of the** Alphabet)

7 = W. of the A.W.	3 = B. M. (S. H. T. R.)	76 = T. in a B. P.	1000 = W. that a P. is W.	13 = S. on the A. F.
1001 = A.N.	4 = Q. in a G.	8 = G. T. in a L. B. C.	29 = D. in F. in a L. Y.	90 = D. in the R. A.
12 = S. of the Z.	1 = W. on a U.	101 = D.	64 = S. on a C.	99 = B. of B. on the W.
54 = C. in a D. (with the J.)	5 = D. in a Z. C.	23 = S.	40 = D. and N. of the G. F.	18 = H. on G. C.
9 = P. in the S.S.	24 = H. in a D.	4 = H. a J. F. G.	2 = T. T.	8 = S. on a S. S.
88 = P. K.	57 = H. V.	16 = M. on a D. M. C.	5 = G. L.	2.5 = C. in a T. A. F.
32= D. F. at which W. F.	11 = P. on a F. T.	12 = D. of C.	7 = D. S.	3 = M. in a T.

Goodbye and Good Luck Seniors!


Andrew Clark
Stefanie Walker
Laura M. Griffith
"Seriously, I'm not lazy!"
Julie Strassman
"I want you to make yourself a little more uncomfortable."
Anna M. Blaine
Juan E. Bach
Kari Ogilvie
"The O"
DOUG #1
Jay Theobald
"Hoom, igna, chowha, neha! Hoona, igna, chowha, neha! Hoona, igna, chowha, neha?'
Joshua Lambie
"Live or Die"
"Flipper knuckle peanut jester handling the cherry fondue."